



Austin-Travis County Food Policy Board

MEETING MINUTES
June 12, 2020

The Austin-Travis County Food Policy Board (ATCFPB) convened on Friday, June 12, 2020 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCING <http://www.austintexas.gov/page/watch-atxn-live>

Board Members in Attendance:

Andrea Abel, Felipe Camacho, Joi Chevalier, Kacey Hanson, Kara Prior (Vice-Chair), Karen Magid (Chair), Ryan Rosshirt, Sharon Mays, Ellen Sweets (joined at 8:27 am)

Absent board members: Emily De Maria

Staff in Attendance:

Edwin Marty, Sam Night, Amanda Rohlich

CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair Karen Magid called the meeting to order at 8:07 am

CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: GENERAL

- a. Errol Schweizer – speaking to Black Lives Matter and the overfunding of APD and underfunding of food and community services. APD most deadly force in Texas. Recommends 1) Support for RISE fund, housing, Austin Public Health 2) Support for the COVID-19 working group of the food policy board recommendations, 3)
- b. Paula McDermott -- 42% of ACC students were experiencing food insecurity pre-pandemic. Importance of student meals which drops off after graduations from high school. Calling attention to the racialized food system. Volunteers can't do this work anymore; the City needs to invest in food systems.
- c. Mokshika Sharma – program director of Keep Austin Together, an effort to provide prepared meals with private and public (County) funds. By end of June, will have provided over 50,000 meals. This service was developed as a response to the pandemic but highlighted the need for this service to continue.
- d. Jodi Lane – adopt critical needs of immediate support but also look to fund long term support with Regional Food System Planning and a Food System support office.
- e. Farah Rivera – CEO of Serafina. Speaking to the permitting requirement for charitable feeding organization. Asking board to help remove requirements.
- f. Max Elliott – Speaking to the racialized food system that has been highlighted in the recent pandemic. Need for a Department of Food Justice to address the issues of the food system. We need big investments to create a truly just food system.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MAY 11th MEETING

Board Member Joi Chevalier motioned to approve the meeting minutes from May 11, 2020, with Board Sharon Mays seconding the motion. Passed on a 8-0 vote.

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2. STAFF BRIEFINGS

- a. New staff introductions –
 - i. Carol Fraser (Economic Development Department) – Pronouns: they/them. Food Systems Program Coordinator. Working on expanding food retail. Healthy Corner Stores, Food System incentivization looking at a variety of ways to incentivize food businesses (processors, up-cycling, distributors, producers/farmers).
 - ii. Sari Alborno (Watershed Protection) – Working on a project to investigate the viability of sustainable agriculture on flood plain buyout land that the city owns to activate these lands that cannot be inhabited. Is the soil safe, what crops could be viable, what safety protocols need to be put in place. Centering on equity and consulting with Equity Office; those impacted by floods are deriving benefit from these efforts. CRAFT summit planning for conference in the Fall that will focus on growing food on public land as well as on floodplain land. This work will culminate in a report and proposals to be considered. Position is temp. Looking for examples of agriculture on floodplains. Examples of projects run by municipality where displacement or environmental impact has been handled well; honoring their displacement. Reading material, connections/networking, resilience and COVID-19.
 - iii. Jennifer Steverson (PARD) – Community Gardens Program Coordinator. Streamline the community garden permit process. Working with Office of Design and Delivery to launch an online permit process. Centering on equity issues to ensure that community members have access to all the resources they need to develop a community garden. How can we support efforts in the Eastern Crescent of Austin. John Trevino Park master plan includes community agriculture. Providing additional support to community gardeners during the pandemic in the form of seedlings, mulch and compost. Partnered with the Travis County Extension Service to distribute seeds from Zilker Botanical Garden. Launching a webinar series to help community gardeners.
- b. Office of Sustainability, update on food access response to COVID-19 – Edwin Marty, Food Policy Manager and Food Access Coordination Taskforce Lead.
 - i. Coordination, Communication and Information Sharing: Hosting weekly calls with organization and agencies that are providing food access support, with the EOC, and with elected officials. Encouraging all to use United Way 211 call-in line and Connectatx.org website for food access needs
 - ii. Food Access and Emergency Food Operations
 - i. EAT (Eating Apart Together) to provide food for people experiencing homelessness. Partnership with Central Texas Food Bank to provide 1000 bags weekly. Partnership with Revolution Foods to provide 1000 prepared meals daily. Funding approved to continue these programs through the end of July.
 - ii. Support for orgs working in food access space
 1. OOS funded Farmshare Austin, Drive a Senior West, Urban Roots, Keep Austin Fed, and Good Apple.

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2. PPE support connecting gloves, masks and hand sanitizer to emergency feeding operations.
 3. Support for adult caregiver meals at AISD, DVISD and others.
 4. Support for WIC program helping to develop a shopping and home delivery pilot program.
- iii. Support for Local Economies
 - i. City funded the Neighborhood Pop-Up Grocery model where restaurants can serve as neighborhood grocery locations.
 - ii. Support for farmers markets to ensure they continue to operate during pandemic.
 - iv. Policy and Funding Support
 - i. Pandemic- EBT funding

3. OLD BUSINESS

- c. Board Infrastructure & Protocol
 - i. Board vacancies
 - i. Roman Gonzalez resigned from the board
 - ii. Current vacancies: one mayoral and one County Commissioner Gerald Daugherty
 - iii. Kara Prior is lead on the recruitment process
 - ii. Review Board Members' meetings with City and County Officials
 - i. Joi Chevalier met with Mayor's Office, Harper-Madison, Flannigan, and County Judge Sam Briscoe
 - ii. Sharon Mays met with the Mayor's Office regarding the food pantry recommendation (via email)

4. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Board Annual Report and responsibilities (tabled item for next meeting)
- b. Community Climate Plan – food working group recommendations
 - i. Karen Magid reviewed the WG recommendation and asked for feedback on strategies by June 30th
- c. Working Group Briefings and Recommendation
 - i. Build Opportunities for Food Entrepreneurs – have not met since pandemic started but individuals and organizations have done some advocacy around the recommendation
 - ii. Support Farms & Farmers – no updates
 - iii. Food and Climate – (see Community Climate Plan updates)
 - iv. Healthy Food Access to All Communities
 - i. Support for the COVID-19 recommendations
 - v. COVID-19 Food System Response
 - i. Karen Magid reviewed the recommendation
 - ii. Ellen Sweets made a motion to discuss the recommendations. Joi Chevalier seconded the motion. The vote passed on a 9-0 vote.
 - iii. The recommendation was approved pending final edits on a 9-0 vote.

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- d. Review of Board Member Assignment
 - i. Karen Magid will send out Austin Community Climate Plan goals and Strategies
 - ii. All Board members send Karen comments on the COVID-19 recommendations
 - iii. Schedule a meeting in July
 - iv. Joi wants to present a recommendation on Food Waste at future meeting

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- e. Revisit COVID 19 Food System Response
- f. Staff to present on best practices from around the country
- g. Food and climate goals and strategies included in Austin Community Climate Plan
- h. Revisit list of future agenda items based on previously identified groups
- i. WG to pull together reports to write Annual Report (due at end of July)
- j. Strategic Planning in August

ADJOURNMENT

Board Chair Karen Magid adjourned the meeting at 9:32 am

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